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1894

Tulane

University



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CEREMONIES

AT THE

LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE

OF THE

Arts and Sciences College Building

OF

TULANE UNIVERSITY,

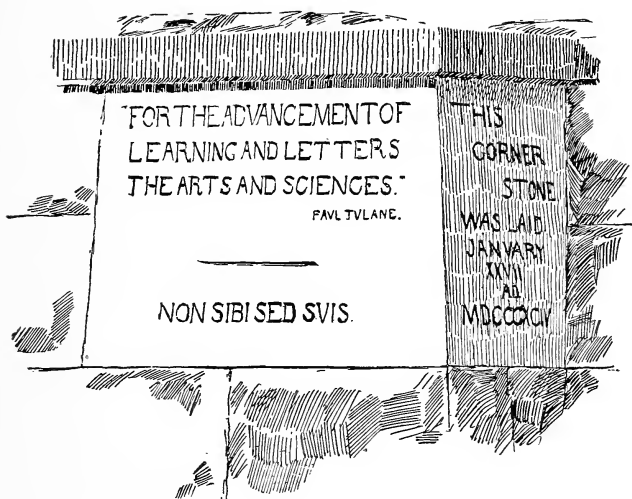
NEW ORLEANS,

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1894.



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CEREMONIES.

A large concourse of persons assembled on Saturday afternoon, January 27, upon the occasion of the laying of the corner stone of the building for the College of Arts and Sciences, the largest of the group of buildings now in process of erection and the central building for the present uses of the University.

The grounds purchased by the administrators of the Tulane Educational Fund as the new site of the University and College are extensive and admirably adapted for the purpose, having 582 feet front on St. Charles avenue, facing Audubon Park, and extending over 12,000 feet toward the rear of the city. A portion of this tract, about 1600 feet in depth, reaching from St. Charles avenue to Long street, has been set aside for College and University purposes.

The Arts and Sciences College Building, the Physical Laboratory, the Chemical Laboratory, resembling in appearance and dimensions the Physical Laboratory, the several Workshops and Mechanical and Electrical Laboratories are now in process of construction.

A Gymnasium is also to be built, and in the rear of this building suitable grounds will be improved for athletic purposes.

The building for the College of the Arts and Sciences is the largest of the collection. It has a frontage of 250 feet 8 inches, a depth of 69 feet 6 inches, with basement, two stories and attic, a height of about 70 feet from the ground. It faces St. Charles avenue, being set back about 200 feet from the line of the street. This building is of Bedford stone. All details in the plans of the several buildings have been carefully considered.

This change of location marks an era in the history of Tulane University. The occasion of laying the corner stone brought together an assembly of representative men and women distinguished in

letters, science and the learned professions, municipal and State officials, and many others interested in the growth and prosperity of educational institutions.

The Board of Administrators of the Tulane Educational Fund were present, with the Faculties and officers of the several departments of the University, the Society of Alumni and the body of students with their class flags and colors.

WILLIAM PRESTON JOHNSTON, LL.D.,

President of the University, called the meeting to order and announced the exercises, as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

We are about to lay the corner stone of Tulane University. I hope it may be the corner stone of education in Louisiana. We will open the ceremonies by invoking the Divine blessing. I now take pleasure in introducing to you the

REV. B. M. PALMER, D.D.,

Who will lead in prayer.

Dr. Palmer offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, we adore thee; the king eternal, immortal, invisible; the only wise God, to whom we ascribe honor and glory forever and ever. It has pleased thee to fashion man after thine own image—endowing him with lofty attributes, that he may have his portion and joy in thee.

We especially offer thee the homage of our grateful praise this day, on which we are brought so near the consummation of long-cherished hopes. Help us now by thy grace to lay the corner-stone of this building in firm reliance upon that providence which has guided us thus far in the administration of a solemn trust; and with fervent prayer that this university may, through all time, be a fountain of blessing to this commonwealth and to the world.

We thank thee for the generous benevolence which inspired the large gifts by which this institution has been first endowed and afterward enlarged in its several departments of instruction. Cause the

memories of these donors to be gratefully preserved among the generations that shall come after us. And may it please thee to raise up other benefactors, who shall consecrate their wealth in opening wider still the fountains of knowledge which shall here send forth healing streams to make this, our land, a praise and a joy in all the earth.

To this end we pray that all who are engaged in its work of instruction, and all who are called to be their auxiliaries in every sphere of counsel and labor, may be men who reverence thy holy name, who abide by the teachings of thine inspired word; men of faith and pious zeal, who feel their responsibility to thee, and who seek thy guidance and favor in all they undertake.

And now to thee, the Lord our shield, the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, and to thy watchful care, we commit these interests so dear to our hearts. Through faith alone in thee we lay the corner stone on which this university shall ever rest, praying that grace, mercy and peace, as a triune benediction, may shine upon its headstone as a crown of glory, while time shall last. And to thy name, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be the praise forever and ever.

President Johnston then introduced the

REV. BEVERLEY WARNER, D. D.,

Rector of Trinity Church, New Orleans, who delivered the following address:

MANHOOD THE CORNER STONE OF CIVILIZATION.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

The laying of the corner stone of an institution of this sort, the marking of a certain stage of progress in its work, is of the greatest importance and the greatest interest, not only in the history of the University itself, but also to the city, the State, even to the whole nation. The removal from an old place to a new and the laying of a corner stone that marks such a removal is one of those

noteworthy events deserving to be made much of, as in a way you are making much of the present occasion. It marks an advance in the life of the University; an advance which is of the nature, not of a monument by the wayside, but of a stepping-stone across the rills of time into larger fields. As the corner stone is the meeting point between the foundation laid low in the obscure trenches and those noble walls and towers which are soon to be raised on that foundation squared and completed by the corner stone itself, so is the manhood of this generation related to the past and the future.

As we thus take public and formal note of the "old order changing, yielding place to the new," we are called upon to have in mind a grateful sense of what is due to the benefactor and benefactors who made this change of place, with its opportunities of larger work, possible, by past donations to this University.

Looking forth upon this audience, and reviewing silently the history of this institution, so intimately connected with the lives of many here present, and many who having done their part in their time have gone to their reward, I can not refrain from calling attention to the fact that this University is the result of an accepted and realized stewardship of wealth in the past of those who were parts of the community life themselves. The names of Tulane, Newcomb and Richardson are to us a proud and grateful memory, not only because they have accomplished certain splendid practical results in these notable buildings that bear their names, but because in giving you their loving thoughts in the form of such edifices as mark the growing and expanding life of the University they are but rendering back what they have first received from the community and from its life. It is a happy presage for the future that those who are now receiving the life and influence and inspiration of Tulane, will in the time to come give back to it in some shape, of what they have received. For there are among your instructors those who have received a good part of their intellectual equipment at these altars of learning, and now in turn are ministering it to others. It is a matter for congratulation that the names of some of those who are the foundation and pillars of this University are well and honorably known, not only within but beyond your borders. This comes back a bene-

faction to you also, because it brings not only individual reputation, which is in itself a small enough thing, but it sends out the light and the truth through the length and breadth of the land, and even to within the walls of the ancient universities beyond the sea, and it marks the fact that Tulane University is not a local or a sectional institution, but ranks, in the men who are the only makers of universities, as a contributor to that sum of knowledge and enlightenment which makes the whole world a better and a brighter world.

One fact of great importance comes strongly home to us, as this new era opens above this new corner stone. The laying of a corner stone in this, which is often and most truly called an age of peculiar transition, is the outward and visible pledge that while old things are passing away and all things becoming new (in form, at least), some things are settled beyond fear of disturbance. Old truths and forms of truth are subjects of question and query and doubt. We are prone, in these last days of the nineteenth century, perhaps too prone, to cast off old forms because they are old, and to peer too curiously into the new because it is new. Such a period as this, when daily, venerable walls of partition are being battered down; when men stand defiant before the holy of holies in religion, in science, in life, and, with daring hand, seek to draw back that veil which God himself has dropped between human eyes and divine mysteries—such an age needs the reminder for which this corner stone stands, that no man lives by doubt alone. Doubt is a quickening tonic, but it is not the bread of life. The age of transition can not last, even as the disorder and confusion about this spot to-day, made necessary by the demands of a larger life for this University, can not always exist. The University is passing from its old form and shell, which was sufficient for its childhood, into a new and beauteous framework more suited to its expanding work. So this corner stone, the point of contact and departure between the old and the new, marks the truth for humanity, in this age of trial and troubled discipline, intellectual and religious, that we are passing into a state which will be a settled state. I take it to be the real and high use of this University life, not simply to hand over formulas of thought to students with their diplomas,

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but to so inspire the inner life of those who drink at the founts of learning here as that they shall have convictions of truth, and not merely opinions about truth. The corps of instructors and professors are here not to tell men what to think and to believe, but to teach them how to think for themselves on right lines.

There are standards in the purely intellectual life, as truly as there are canons in the purely artistic life. We are as able to measure the just accomplishment of the truth-seeker in any chair of this University as that of any follower of the art of Angelo or Beethoven—both truth-seekers after their kind. All truth may be gauged and judged by standards. The University is about its true work in helping men to form the true standard.

As this corner stone is laid to-day upon these broad and deep foundations, we recall the past years as years of struggle and trial, but we look forward to the years to come as fruitful years of accomplishment. The inspiration of this scene to-day should be a sign pledge of many, many days to come of inspiration in the lives of all, teachers and students, who are destined to inhabit the walls not yet builded.

This corner stone stands in the same relation to the whole building, completed foundation and unfinished walls, as the manhood of this generation, this century, to that of the past and of the future. We are builded upon the past, we are pledged to the future. If men have laid wisely in other centuries, we are the more bound to build wisely for the present and the future. We stand here to-day the heirs of all the ages, but only so by right, as we hold the heritage in trust, to make the coming years debtors to what shall be finely and splendidly wrought in this our day. Here we stand, the manhood of this nineteenth century, on the corner-stone of the best civilization of the world, taking out of the past all good, true and helpful things, but not halting there. Looking forward and upward, even as these workmen will select from the stones about these foundations in order to lay course upon course into a fair and splendid edifice, so must we select from the great mass of opinions, theories, convictions, that are crowding about us in these

latter days, to build a temple of manhood in which shall be found only those things which are honest and of good report.

One thought occurs to me in conclusion. The practical founder of the new life of this University lived for a good part of his life in my own old University town of Princeton, where he drew some of that inspiration, doubtless, which has crystallized into this promise of a larger life for the far South. It is on such corner-stones of progress that the best civilization of the North and the South are to build up a nation completely and literally united in aim and sentiment. Even religion has failed in some conspicuous instances to bring together the one time warring and contending factions, and in the Church are still existent, in form, at least, remnants of the old dissensions and divisions. But here from the corner-stone of an institution of learning, made possible by one who was of the North and of the South, may we not all see splendid prophecies of the future? and as we are here assembled from all quarters of this once divided people, may we not, with entire reverence and in joyous hope, paraphrase the Psalmist, and declare that on such a corner stone as this, dedicated to the larger life of manhood, the North and the South meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all?

President Johnston then introduced the

HON. CHARLES E. FENNER,

President of the Board of Administrators of Tulane University, who said :

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

Whoever has wandered with sympathetic soul amidst the academic shades, the pillared aisles, the groined arches, the architectural splendors or dignities of some ancient seat of learning, like Oxford or Cambridge, in old England, or like the more modern, yet to us venerable, universities of our own land, such as Harvard and Yale and the University of Virginia, must recall his profound sense of the solemn yet exhilarating impressiveness of such surroundings and of the wealth of inspiring associations which they awaken.

Within those sacred precincts professors famous for learning in the arts and sciences have burned the midnight oil and expended their lives in the noble task of combating ignorance, spreading the light of knowledge, equipping the minds of their youthful countrymen with the powers and resources of education and training their faculties to higher fitness in all the fields of thought and action.

Thither thronged generation after generation of aspiring youth, the "roses and expectancies of the fair state," bringing with them their ingenuous impulses, their bright hopes, their eager ambitions, to engage in the struggles and contests of college life, to enrich their minds with precious stores of knowledge, and by the gymnastics of earnest thought and study to train themselves for better competition in the race of after life. The roster which the alma mater keeps of her children, who have come and gone, blazes with names the mention of which fills her heart with ineffable pride. Like the Roman mother she points to these and proudly says: 'Here are my jewels.' Here she shows the name of some great teacher who has nobly propagated her own work of education; here that of some renowned statesman, who guides the destinies of the nation; here that of some orator, whose eloquence thrills the world; here that of some historian, who has made the past to live again upon his storied page; here that of some great judge, who has become an oracle of justice; here that of some inspired preacher, who has reformed the lives and saved the souls of sinners; here that of some wise physician, who has relieved the sufferings and prolonged the lives of thousands; here that of some profound philosopher, who has explored the mysteries of human faculties and attributes and relations; here that of some discoverer, who has wrung new secrets from reluctant nature; here that of some inventor, whose skill has made new combinations in mechanical forces into machines which serve the needs and supply the wants of man, maximizing production, minimizing labor, increasing the comforts of life and adding enormously to the wealth of the world; here that of some immortal poet, whose song has captivated the human heart, and, soaring heavenward, has borne upon its wings to higher and purer spheres the souls of men.

Under the shelter of her protecting arms and nurtured at her affluent breast, these choice spirits gained their growth and garnered up the strength and skill which made them emissaries of light and knowledge, and flooded the world with benefits and blessings. The University, as the capstone of the educational arch, has been the most potent factor in human progress in the development of civilization, in the amelioration of human conditions, in the accumulation of wealth, and in the establishment of the brotherhood of man on the basis of wisely guarded and enlightened liberty, equality and fraternity.

The glories which memory gathers about the shrines of ancient universities imagination must foreshadow as the coming inheritance of the young and vigorous giant, which answers to the name of Tulane University of Louisiana.

We are here to-day to celebrate the foundation of a fitting and permanent home for her. In my mind's eye I see noble structures rise from these broken walls into the proportions of their completed beauty; I see these barren grounds clothed with verdure and garlanded with flowers, and sheltered by widespread trees, renewing the groves of Academus; I hear the footsteps of throngs of students hurrying to and fro on their scholastic duties, and the voices of learned teachers expounding the farthest reaches of art and science. I mark the recurring processions of her titled graduates, flushed with their collegiate successes and triumphs, passing from her portals to take their places in the ranks of those who fight the battle of life, confident in the strength which she has bestowed, to win honor and renown for her and for themselves. I follow them in their varied careers, and while some may faint and fall, many stoutly forge their way to the front and bear the banner of Tulane into the thickest of the fray, where bravest deeds are done and worthiest honors won.

And now, fellow-administrators, learned professors, students, friends and patrons of learning, while I lay the corner-stone of this College of Arts and Sciences, beneath this bright sky and with the spirit of Paul Tulane looking down upon us, join with me in confident auguries of the brilliant future awaiting Tulane University,
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and in an earnest invocation to the throne of grace that her work may be a great and good work, done well and wisely, and redounding to the benefit of humanity and to the glory of Him from whom all glories come.

After the corner-stone had been laid in its place, President Johnston stated that

MRS. MARY ASHLEY TOWNSEND

Had been requested by the Board of Administrators to write a poem for the occasion, and that she had kindly consented to do so. The poem was then read by Professor Dillard, as follows:

THE CORNER STONE.

With breathing bugle come, and with bassoon;
With 'cello answering to the supple wrist—
And resined bow of violist:—
Come with whispering flutes in tune;
 Sound, sound the animating drum;
 Be horn nor hautboy longer dumb;
 Let swooning veins of violins awake
 And vivified vibrate
 With soul-songs inarticulate,
 All hallowéd for this sweet day's sweet sake!
Sing to the silences until they sing—
Give music wing
Until her fetterless flight
Upon the very skies, in melody, shall write
The infinite meaning of this hour's delight,
And echo, gathering up the harmonies,
Shall send them drifting down the centuries!

II.

A princess is in fairy story sung,
Who, beautifully young,
Sleeps on for years and years,
Untouched by pain or tears,
Or blight of envious tongue;
While into forests grow the roses fair,
And deep and deeper grows the silence there,
And loneliness is everywhere,
And with her lies the bitter stress
Of idleness and uselessness,
And close, and ever closer press
Indifference and forgetfulness!
Then comes the fair prince to dismiss
All of this
With a kiss!
Beneath the magic contact flies
The spell of slumber from her eyes;
To life and beauty,
To life and duty,
Behold her rise!

III.

The eager builders sought the corner stone,
Gray, primal jewel for the temple's zone—
Deep bosomed in the mysteries
Of earth's unwritten histories,
Far from light
Of day or night
The quarry kept its own from human sight;
On its dim, time-scriptured pages
Only peered the passing ages,
Rose and fell the federations,
Came and went the noise of nations;
Born and buried, generations
Crossed the whirling world and made no sign,
And in its bed the stone still lay supine.

Thus, ever, be it star or stone,
The unneeded is unknown;
But never, never earth forsakes her own:
Ever by her silent gate
The purpose and the power wait
Their given mission to fulfil:
Be it to paint a tilting daffodil,
Be it a world to subjugate,
Or to the poetry of time
To set the music of a rhyme.

IV.

E'en as the princess slept of old,
Unconscious of approaching bliss,
While the years grew manifold
Above her unawakening eyes;
So lay the stone
By years, by drift o'ergrown,
Unseen, unneeded, and unknown,
Nor came the Blast with quickening kiss
Its slumbers to dismiss.
Darkly hidden
Left unbidden
To fill a measure
For work or pleasure,
Dull companioned by the dust and clay,
Inert, unhonored there it lay
Till came the need, the moment, and the man;
Then, earth's perfected plan
Revealed to the expectant space
The presence waiting for the waiting place
Behold! the corner-stone,
At once an altar and a throne!
Unto its hallowed ground
Swing it with bruise nor wound.

Steady! with tender care
Place it with praise and prayer,
Fit for the proud estate,
Noble and consecrate,
Honor's true heir!

V.

Lowered is the corner stone,
With psalm, and song, and festal flowers o'erstrown!
Above it here shall rise,
Beneath our lucent Southern skies,
Beside the shining city and the noble river,
A fane whose light shall fall
Beneficent on all;
A gift that glorifies the gainer and the giver.
Here, Art and Science, hand in hand,
Twin apostles of the True shall stand;
Entering at its welcoming door
Shall Knowledge bring her proudest store.
All the learning and the lore
And wisdom known of yore
Shall pace its floor—
Here shall be the sages' home,
Here shall Athens be, and Rome;
Of the old all that was true,
All the noblest of the new,
All that has been here shall be
Of promise and of prophecy.

VI.

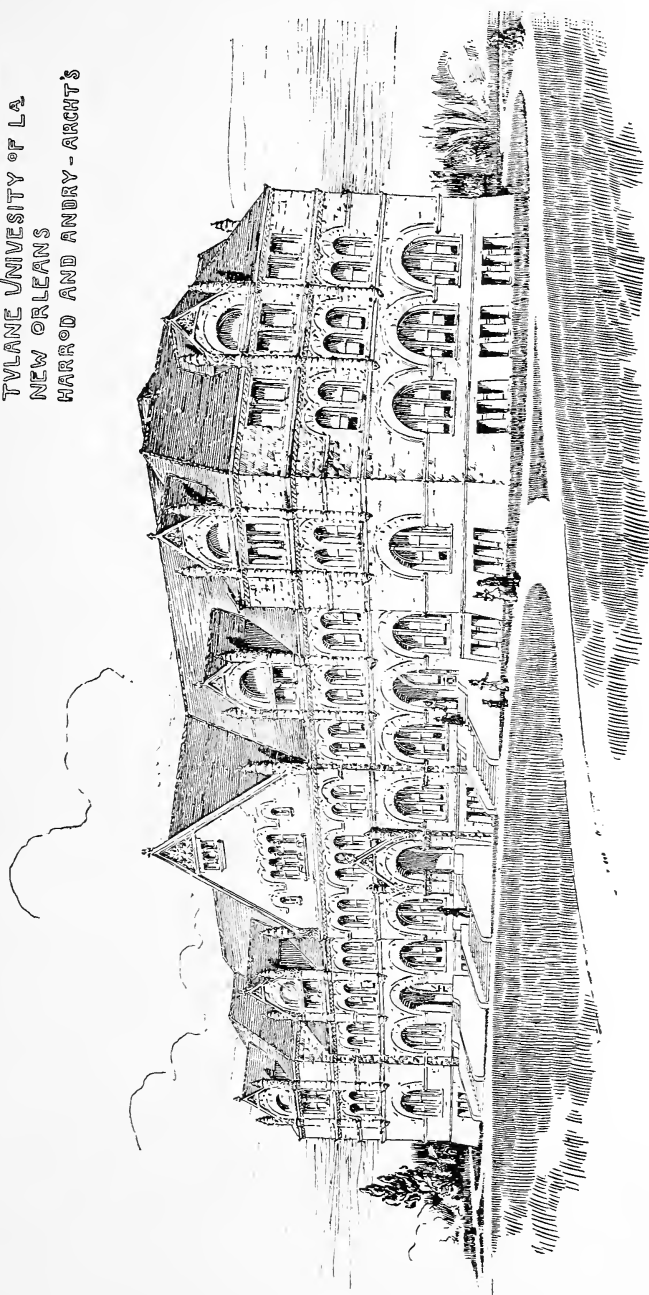
Ah! Egypt, look from 'neath thy dusky, level lids
Upon thy haughty Pyramids;
While low, and ever lower surely sinks
In drifting Nilean sands thy stony Sphinx—
And Memnon's music done
Greeteth no more the coming of the sun!

To thee, to us,
What now is ivory-towered Ephesus?
Or Sidon's sculptured plains,
Or Tadmor's classic fanes,
Beside these fair, perpetual harvests growing
From seed one good man's deed is ever sowing?
Harvests to widen with the widening years
Till they shall compass sphere and hemispheres,
And to the lofty lead men highest
In age and youth,
To find the holiest in the highest,
The Beautiful in Truth!

Ah! blest indeed is he, and truly great,
Who finds in death nor in the grave his earthly fate,
And o'er whose human name
Is held the clasps of an immortal fame
By people and by State!

The benediction was then pronounced by the Right Reverend Davis Sessums, Bishop of Louisiana. He prefaced the benediction with a prayer for the welfare of the university and the educational institutions of the State—that grace and wisdom might be given to the students, instructors and all officers and administrators of learning.

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